

REMARKS

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1 and 9 have been amended and claims 10-18 have been added. Claims 1-18 are pending and under consideration.

On February 19, 2004, Examiner Simon Sing kindly granted the undersigned a personal interview in the Examiner's office. The Examiner's time in preparing for and conducting the interview is acknowledged and gratefully appreciated.

During the interview, the differences between the claimed invention and the cited references were discussed. In summary, it was discussed that the methods and devices described in the references each require a connection to be made before the method can be performed. For example, in U.S. Patent No. 5,151,761, column 5, lines 1-5 describe that the caller is asked whether the caller wishes to hold or be called back. Clearly, if there is communication with the caller, a connection has been made. In U.S. Patent No. 5,311,574, column 4, lines 24-30 indicates that the calling party is prompted for whether not he or she accepts being put in a queue and called back when an agent is available. In order for the calling party to be prompted and respond to the prompt, the calling party must be connected. In U.S. Patent No. 6,185,415, Fig. 2A shows step 62 as requesting an authorization code, "Please enter your user ID and password," from the calling party. Again, the calling party cannot give this information unless a connection is made.

Independent claims 1 and 9 have been amended to recite terminating setup of said connection without making said connection. In the references cited by the Examiner, there is no connection for which setup is terminated without making the connection. If a signaling connection is used, the signaling connection is both setup and made. Similarly, the voice connection in the references is both setup and made.

None of the references cited by the Examiner disclose or suggest terminating setup of said connection without making said connection, as claimed. For this reason, the prior art rejections should be withdrawn.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

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If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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